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**THE BRAKEMAN  
GOES TO CHURCH.**

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**Poetic Version of R. J. Burdette's  
Famous Railroad Piece.  
By F. A. Green.**



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✓  
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## ON THE ROAD AGAIN.

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Fair Lebanon far in the distance,  
Its church towers beginning to wane;  
The *fat* man sits merrily drumming  
A tune on the car-window pane.

The *cross* man is sleeping and snoring  
Near by in a seat snugly curled.  
The *tall* and the *thin* man sits reading  
Grant's famous tour 'round the world,

And wond'ring why "Greene's August Flower"  
Should be printed above the big door  
Of a dark heathen Buddhistic temple  
So far from Columbia's shore;

When up came the Brakeman a smiling,  
And, just as the train gave a lurch,  
He says to me, "What do ye think, Bill?  
Well, yesterday I went to church!"

Surprised, I replied with inflection,  
Allowing my voice to ascend,  
"And is it a pertinent question  
To ask you what church you attend?"

"Which do you guess, now?" he asked me.  
I hazarded, "Some UNION MISSION?"  
"Naw! I wouldn't run on a branch road,  
No, not under any condition.

It's all very well if you like it,  
But I should prefer the main line;  
Your run is a straight one and reg'lar  
And you go on schedule time,

And don't have to wait on connections  
An hour, or it may be a day,  
With seldom a soul to speak to,  
While passing the moments away."

"EPISCOPAL?" next, I then tried him;  
But, as before, missed the guess.  
"Time is too fast, too exhaustive,  
So like the Fast Mail and Express.

All palace cars, no easy coaches,  
And everything nice, very neat;  
Stops only at biggest way stations,  
And an extra charge for a seat.

All uniformed trainmen—conductors  
(And just then he gave me a hunch)  
All carry a bright nickel lantern  
And new triple-plate' silver punch.

The rolling-stock rolls very easy,  
Too rich in its splendor, too fine;  
'Taint often you hear a 'Receiver'  
Appointed for any such line.

Some mighty nice people aboard it;  
But I do not fancy a crowd  
That make themselves free and too easy,  
And train-boys are never allowed.

The passengers are so accustomed  
To back-talk and wrangle—you see—  
I could not endure such a palace,  
No, that's not the right train for me."

"UNIVERSALIST?" then I suggested.

"Broad gauge," said the "knight o' the road."

"Too much complimentary bus'ness,  
And carry too heavy a load.

Most everyone travels on passes—

But now and then, once in a while—  
'Tain't often the Con. takes a ticket;  
'Bout once in a two-fifty-mile.

It stops at the little flag stations

And moves most too awfully slow.  
There's nothing it ever runs into  
Excepting the Union Depot.

No smoking car 'tached to this rail-way;

Train orders are rather too vague.  
The passengers treat the men shameful—  
'Tis but little less than a plague."

I asked, "Was it not PRESBYTERIAN?"

Said he, "'Narrow gauge,' pretty track;  
And *they'd* rather tunnel a mountain  
Than ever go 'round or turn back.



The grade is exact spirit-level  
And never washed out by the rain;  
The passengers show up their tickets  
Before they get on to the train.

A mighty strict road; but too narrow,  
You're taking too much of a chance.  
In a seat you will have to sit single;  
No room in the aisle to dance.

No stop-over tickets permitted;  
Must always go through to the call  
Of the station to which you are destined  
Or you cannot get on at all.

When the cars are all full to o'erflowing,  
There's no extra coaches put on.  
Cars built at the shops for so many,  
No room for some sorrowing one."

"May be you joined the FREE THINKERS?"  
"Scrub road," the brakeman replied.  
"Road-bed of dirt and no ballast,  
And not very pleasant to ride.

No time-card nor any dispatcher,  
All trains running wild as a hawk.  
The engineer runs as he chooses—  
I think I would much rather walk.

Smoke just as much as you want to,  
And just kind o' go as you please;  
There's too many side-tracks and switches  
To let a man feel at his ease.

The switchmen too often found napping;  
No, I do not fancy *that* route  
Where switches are all left wide open,  
The target lamps, too, are dead out.

Get on to the train at your liking  
And leave it whenever you choose.  
You don't have to show up your tickets,  
Nor have any tickets to lose.

Conductor is always expected  
To do little else than to try  
And please all the people that travel,  
And care for the babies that cry.

D'ye know, sir, I once asked the question,  
    'To where do you run?' and 'tis true  
The Division Superintendent  
    Said 'He hoped to die if he knew.'

'Could your General Superintendent  
    The said information convey?'  
And he confidentially told me  
    (To please never to give it away)

But he did not think that they had one,  
    Nor did he believe if they had  
That *he'd* know one whit more about it  
    Than some little six-year-old lad.

I asked him to whom he reported,  
    To 'nobody' came the reply  
In tones very clear and emphatic,  
    And a manner that seemed to defy.

I asked a conductor to tell me  
    From whence came his orders—his boast  
Was *he* never had to take orders  
    From any live man or dead ghost.

The engineer, also, I questioned;  
He replied in a very high pitch,  
That he'd run that train to *his liking*  
Or run it straight into the ditch.

I don't care to run on a railroad  
That makes no connections—no sign  
Of a head or a superintendent,  
Runs 'nowhere' and never on time.

"The METHODIST, then, did you try *it*?"  
"You're shouting!" he said with a smile.  
A *nice* road and plenty of traffic  
And full steam is up all the while.

The steam-gauge shows just an hundred,  
Enough all the time and to spare;  
A *live* road and pleasant conductors,  
And everything managed with care.

The train-lamps all shine like a headlight,  
And flash like a glittering sword.  
Conductor is heard a great distance  
Every time he shouts 'All aboard.'

Stop-over checks only issued  
On tickets that read to the end;  
Jump off or get on at your pleasure  
When you want to see an old friend.

Yes, drop off the train at your fancy,  
Do th' stations and have a good time;  
Hop on to the next big revival  
A thund'ring along on the line.

Good and whole-souled, the conductors;  
One seldom feels sad and alone.  
There isn't a road in the country  
Where passengers feel more at home.

Must pay the full fare—there's no passes,  
No rebates—but now do you mind—  
'Tis a safe road and elegant coaches  
With 'Wesleyanhouse' air-brakes combined."

"CONGREGATIONAL, did you not take *it*?"  
"Good road-bed, fine cars, understand,  
'Tis an old line and skilfully managed,  
The oldest, perhaps, in the land.

Directors give no interference

With the Superintendent ; its plans  
Are most too all-fired independent,  
Not exacting enough its demands.

Now if I remember correctly,

Some two or some three years ago,  
Didn't one of the Superintendents  
Let one of their old stations go?"

A popular road and a good one.

You're not even asked for your pass;  
But its mighty pleasant to travel  
With such a congenial class.

"Perhaps then you rode with the BAPTIST?"

"Ha, ha!" said the brakeman, "*you're right.*  
The river road; yes, she's a *daisy*,  
The landscape a beautiful sight.

The road sweeps about through the valleys

In fine, graceful curves—splendid ride—  
A winding around all obstructions  
To keep by the bright river's side.

The track is steel rail and rock ballast,  
Not a side-track nor switch on the line;  
The engines are made with big drivers  
And built like the 'nine-ninety-nine.'

Single track from the round-house to Zion;  
Sure connections, and seldom delay.  
And it takes heaps of water to run it,  
A full head of steam all the way.

Strong, double tanks at each station,  
And there's not an engine, I'll wage,  
Can pull a full pound—run a mile—  
With less than a strong, double gauge.

It runs through a beautiful country,  
Those grand, river-roads always do;  
The one side the hills and the mountains,  
The other the river's full view.

And always its steady, hard climbing  
Up grade all the way 'gainst the winds,  
Until the long journey is ended  
Where the fountain-head ever begins.

Yes, I'll take the road by the river  
Every time for a beautiful trip.  
The passengers' hand-shake is hearty,  
It holds like a cable-car grip.

And when the Con. came for the tickets,  
(On the wee basket-punch plan)  
Now, I didn't ask him to pass me;  
But paid my full fare like a man.

An hour's brisk run for a quarter,  
A band and a concert thrown in.  
I tell you, O Pilgrim, take *that* road  
When you want to flee from your sin."

Just then from the big locomotive  
The whistle was heard, long and shrill,  
Announcing approach to a station;  
He shouted aloud "Zionsville.

This train makes no stops between here and  
the 'Golden Gate.' "









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“ All Aboard.”